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ABSTRACT

The first of a series of four, this booklet is designed to interest and involve 9- to 11-year-olds in learning about human development. "Fun to Grow On" focuses specifically on helping elementary school children share and enjoy some simple activities with preschool children. The activities are intended to teach older children that (1) each person is unique and may learn in ways that are different from others of the same age; (2) very simple experiences, which may be "old hat" to 9- to 11-year-olds, can be exciting and challenging for 3- to 6-year-olds; (3) play activities provide experiences that are necessary and important in the growth and development of healthy human beings; and (4) completing a particular activity or learning to do an activity exactly as described should always be less important than helping children have fun together. Suggested activities allow participants to enjoy each other, explore and express feelings, develop healthy bodies, talk and listen, and learn about their world. (RH)

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FUN TO GROW ON



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FUN TO GROW ON

Fun To Grow On is the first in a series of four projects developed by the Northeast Family Life Personal Development Committee. The other projects in this series are *What Are Children Like?*, *Understanding Children Through Play*, and *Caring For Young Children In The Home*. These projects are designed to interest and involve 9- to 11-year-olds in looking at the fascinating process of human development. *Fun To Grow On* focuses specifically on helping older children share and enjoy some simple activities with younger children. As the 9- to 11-year-olds observe and interact with preschoolers they will need help in understanding:

- 1) That each person is unique and may learn in ways that are different from others of the same age;
- 2) That very simple experiences, which may be "old hat" to 9- to 11-year-olds, can be exciting and challenging for 3- to 6-year-olds;
- 3) That play activities provide experiences that are necessary and important in the growth and development of healthy human beings;
- 4) That completing a particular activity or learning to do an activity exactly as it is described in the project should always be *less* important than helping children have fun together.

Notes

This project is designed to help you introduce your group to the fun they can have while learning about 3- to 6-year-old children. The activities suggested are divided into those 9- to 11-year-olds can do together in the group meeting and those 9- to 11-year-olds can do alone with a preschool child.

These activities allow group members and young children to:

- Enjoy each other
- Explore and express feelings
- Develop healthy bodies
- Talk and listen
- Learn about their world



As leader you can select the activities you feel your group would enjoy most. You may wish to choose some that are familiar to you, but we hope you will also try others that provide new experiences.

Important points about young children are included for you to pass on to the 9- to 11-year-olds. Discussing each activity with the pre-teens after they have tried it with the younger children will be a valuable part of the learning process.

These are only a few of the experiences that the 9- to 11-year-olds and the preschooler might enjoy both separately and together. You may know of others that would be good to try.

Use the enclosed *Learning Sheet* as a basis for discussing with the pre-teens what they have learned.

If your group is really "turned on" to this project and is interested in learning more about young children, we suggest that you also try the project *What Are Children Like?* (NE-217)

Fun With Children

Learning Sheet

1. Which activity that you did with other members of your group was most fun? Why was it fun?

2. Which activity that you did with a 3- to 6-year-old child was most fun for you? Why was it fun?

3. Which activity that you did with the preschooler was most fun for the preschooler? Why was it fun?

4. What surprised you about preschoolers?

5. What other things would you like to know about preschoolers?

6. What did you learn about preschoolers that you did not know before?

ACTIVITIES FOR FUN & GROWTH

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What Can You Do With a Cardboard Box?

Materials needed

Ask each member to bring some cardboard boxes of any size or shape. Explain that these should be throw-away boxes, because they may be cut up, smashed, or otherwise damaged during the activity. Examples of good boxes are: large sturdy cartons from a liquor or grocery store; shoe boxes; oatmeal boxes; well rinsed milk cartons or clean ice cream container drums.

You might provide: scissors, string, cellophane tape, glue, and a sample wallpaper book (wallpaper stores will furnish these as the samples become outdated).

Ideas for 9- to 11-year-olds

Put all the boxes collected by members together on the floor where everyone can see them. Brainstorm, "What can we do with these valuable materials?" Perhaps the group could build a city, castle, or doll house. Or maybe the boxes seem to go together as a "crazy" sculpture.

After using the boxes for a group building activity, talk with the group about some things you could do with individual boxes. Could you make a piece of doll furniture or a garage for small trucks? Could you make some big building blocks? Could you use a piece of wallpaper to make a pretty treasure box? Can you make a drum or shaker? What other ideas do you have?

Ideas for 3- to 6-year-olds

Each preteen could collect boxes to use while playing with a young child. Young children find empty boxes good materials for the buildings and games they like to invent. If you ask, "What can we do with these boxes?" they will usually respond with many enthusiastic suggestions. If a child does not respond, the preteen could talk about some ideas the members tried in the group meeting. Sometimes a shy, uncertain child will join in if the 9- to 11-year-old starts to build and asks for specific help, such as "Could you give me that box, please?" or "Could you help me pile that box on top of this one?" A very young child may enjoy making a tower of boxes and knocking them down over and over again (remember, this requires *lots* of space!).



Notes

This activity encourages children of all ages to use their imaginations with free materials. Again, stress to the 9- to 11-year-olds that *they* can try out *their* ideas in the group meeting. Younger children may have many other ideas to try with a helpful 9- to 11-year-old. Remind the older child that younger children are fickle and may not always like what the older child has made.

Paper Bag Puppets



Materials needed

- paper bags #5
- felt-tipped pens or crayons
- scraps of fabric, ribbon, yarn, construction paper, etc.
- white glue

Use the flat, bottom end of the bag for a face. A paper, ribbon, or fabric tongue can be pasted under the bend of the bag. Other features can be added as desired by the 9- to 11-year-old. Put one hand in the bag, with your fingers in the crease and your thumb at about the chin, and "open and close" the puppet's mouth.

Ideas for 9- to 11-year-olds

Preteens will enjoy designing and making puppets. They may then enjoy having their puppets "talk" with each other and may even wish to improvise a short puppet show.

Ideas for 3- to 6-year-olds

Some young children will enjoy working with a preteen to make a puppet that has recognizable features. Others will enjoy scribbling on the bag and perhaps gluing scraps of material in various places on the bag. The young child may enjoy seeing and hearing the preteen make a puppet "talk," tell a story, sing a song, or perform a simple play. Given an opportunity to use a puppet themselves, some young children will be able to say, "Hello," "How are you?" or other simple phrases. A few of them will be able to carry on lively conversations or participate in a simple play. Many will giggle, act silly, and perhaps use the puppet to growl at or even attack their companions.

Notes

Remind the preteens that it is more important for the young children to try their own ideas and to use puppets in the way that feels good to them, than to learn the "right" way to make or use a puppet. The 9- to 11-year-olds should make the puppets they like in the group meeting. The preteens may be surprised at some of the different ways preschoolers think of using the materials.

Remind the 9- to 11-year-olds that their first responsibility is to keep the children safe. Young children should not be allowed to hurt themselves or other people during any activity. Materials can be used freely, but within safe and reasonable limits. Talk with your group about ways of setting limits—for example, "You can let your puppet say anything you like, but you may not use it to hurt me."

There are many other ways to make simple puppets. Ask members to share their ideas with you.



Homemade Books

Materials needed

old magazines and catalogues with many pictures
scissors
white glue
construction paper
hole punch
yarn
clear contact paper (optional)

Ideas for 9- to 11-year-olds

During a group meeting, members can choose and cut out pictures they think will interest young children. Perhaps one member will decide to look for pictures of cars and trucks, another may choose foods or animals, while a third might decide not to be limited to a single category. Pictures can be arranged attractively on sheets of construction paper and glued into place. Pages will be made more durable if each is covered with clear contact paper. Colored magazine pictures contain a toxic substance, which is harmful if ingested. The contact paper prevents this possibility.



When several pages are completed, punch holes and tie together the pages with yarn to make a book.

Ideas for 3- to 6-year-olds

Young children may enjoy looking at and talking about the pictures in books made especially for them by a preteen friend. Sometimes the preteen can tell the younger child about the pictures. "I saw a big red truck like that on my way to school today." "Oh boy! Look at those pineapples! They are my favorite fruit." "I put that cat picture in your book because it reminded me of your pet kitten." Sometimes the younger child may want to tell the preteen about the pictures. It may be fun to ask the young child, "What do you think the next pictures will be?"

Notes

Children usually prefer books with clear, colorful pictures. Pictures of real people doing things or animals behaving as animals may be preferable to cartoons.

There is no single right way to use a book with a young child. Sometimes a child wants to spend several minutes looking carefully at each picture and discussing it in detail. Sometimes he wants to look at only one page, or even one picture, in the book before moving on to another activity. Other times, the child just doesn't want to look at a book at all and says so.

This last reaction might disappoint a 9- to 11-year-old who has worked hard to produce an attractive book. It's wise to warn the preteens that small children react directly and honestly on the basis of their feelings. They are not being rude or naughty if they say they don't want to read right now—just honest. Preteens will be wise not to insist that the children pay attention to the book. Many preteens may feel hurt or rejected if their preschool friends are quickly bored and don't cooperate. Sometimes it's hard to deal with unpleasant feelings, but those feelings are real and honest, too. Another time the children may be very happy to cuddle up and enjoy the book.

Toy Airplanes

Materials needed (for each child)

- 1 medium-sized styrofoam meat tray
- 1 paper clip
- 1 pair of scissors
- 1 pencil
- 1 copy of airplane plans
- 1 piece of paper or recipe card

Ideas for 9- to 11-year-olds

Follow instructions on the airplane pattern. Remind the group that wing piece B must be cut on the edge of the tray. The slight curve in the wings will enable the plane to fly longer. Discuss toys a 3- to 6-year-old would enjoy. Can the preteens remember their favorite toys as preschoolers?

Ideas for 3- to 6-year-olds

Allow the 3- to 6-year-olds to fly the planes. If colors or paints are available, the children might like to decorate the planes. Accept their decorating efforts. Help them feel pleased with what they have done. Encourage the children to talk about their favorite toys. Which ones did they name?

Styrofoam Glider

(Pattern on page 9)

1. Cut body, wing, and tail to pattern size using a styrofoam meat tray.
2. Cut wing piece on bottom upward curve of tray. The curve should begin at the dotted line.
3. Attach paper clip to the nose of the plane.



Notes

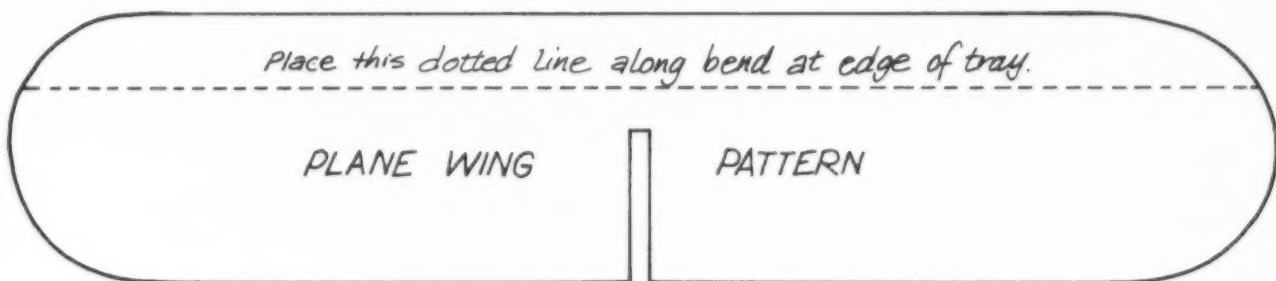
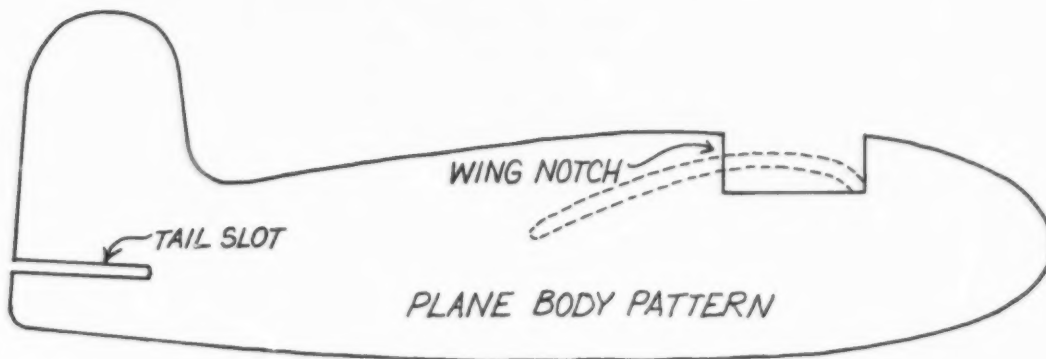
Discuss safe and dangerous toys with the group. Even "safe" toys may be dangerous when used improperly or by a very young child. For example, styrofoam is poisonous if eaten, and a paper clip can cause choking.

Check with your Cooperative Extension Service office or library for ideas of other toys that 9- to 11-year-olds could make. This airplane is a good toy for 9- to 11-year-olds to make for younger children. Talk

with the older children about why they can make the airplane while 3- to 6-year-olds cannot. For example, older children have learned to use their eyes and hands together, to cut with scissors, to work patiently and longer than younger children can. Talk with the group about some experiences they have had that have developed these skills.

*DHEW Publication # (OCD) 73-31 *Fun In The Making* page 30.

Styrofoam Glider Pattern



Play Dough



Materials needed

- 3 cups flour
- 1 cup salt
- water (enough to hold the play dough together)
- large mixing bowl
- measuring cup
- food coloring (optional)
- small plastic bags
- small jar with lid

Mix flour and salt well. In a small jar, combine water, food coloring, and cooking oil. Shake well. Gradually add the liquid mixture to the dry ingredients. Knead mixture with hands until smooth and pliable.

CAUTION: This dough is for playing, not eating. Eating large amounts may cause severe stomach upsets in children.

Ideas for 9- to 11-year-olds

Make play dough at a group meeting. Allow time to play with the dough. Members will be able to take dough with them to use with a preschooler. Remind them that the play dough will keep longer when stored in a closed container.

Ideas for 3- to 6-year-olds

Encourage the child to pound, poke, roll, and otherwise explore the dough. Do not make models for the young child to copy.

Notes

Children of different ages will use the play dough differently. The 9- to 11-year-olds often use the dough to make recognizable shapes (e.g., snakes, bowls, etc.) The 3- to 6-year-olds may not feel the need to make objects; they may enjoy play dough simply because it feels good or enjoy mixing the colored doughs to see what happens.

Aggression Cookies

Materials needed

- 3 cups brown sugar
- 3 cups butter or margarine
- 6 cups oatmeal
- 3 cups flour
- 1 tablespoon soda

Put all ingredients in a large bowl and mash, knead, squeeze, and pound. This step is most important of all! The more aggression you put into the dough the better the cookies will taste. Form the mixture into small balls (smaller than English walnuts). Place on an ungreased cookie sheet. Butter the bottom of a small glass. Then dip the glass into granulated sugar and mash the balls flat. Butter the glass only once or twice, but dip it in sugar after mashing each ball. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 to 12 minutes. Yield: about 15 dozen cookies. These cookies often run together to form large cookies because of the large amount of butter in the recipe. Remember, making these cookies is more important than how they look or taste.

Ideas for 9- to 11-year-olds

Ask the group to mix the dough. On a table covered with plastic or wax paper, pound the dough until the group seems satisfied with the results. Read the recipe for each child to copy on paper. Then read it again slowly. Ask each child to hand his recipe to a neighboring youth for checking during the second reading.

Ideas for 3- to 6-year-olds

The 3- to 6-year-olds may enjoy helping to measure and combine the ingredients. They should be encouraged to feel the dough. Sometimes it's hard for pre-schoolers to understand that this time it's really okay to get their hands gooey.

Notes

This activity gives both groups the chance to really pound, prod, and feel the dough. These cookies don't suffer from hand mixing. In fact, they may taste better if lots of energy has gone from the child into the cookies. Two ideas to mention to both groups are: (1) the importance of mixing the dough with clean hands, and (2) the "OK"ness of really pounding the dough. Remind the 9- to 11-year-olds to watch how the younger children move their fingers and hands as they make the cookies. They are learning to control the small muscles in their fingers. Also, this may be a good time to talk about foods that help build healthy bodies. People can't live on cookies! This activity is especially good for relieving frustrations or anger in children of all ages.



"Look At It" Walk



Materials needed

a back yard, alley, or anyplace indoors
a neighborhood block, park, wooded area,
firehouse, police station, or nearby grocery store

Ideas for 9- to 11-year-olds

Before taking a short walk around the neighborhood, house, backyard, etc., ask the group to kneel on the ground or floor. They are now about as tall as a two year-old. How does the world look? On the walk, kneel occasionally to that height again to remind one another how different the world looks to a preschooler. On the walk, ask these questions:

What sights interest you? What can you see that would interest a young child?

What sounds do you hear? When you're walking with young children what sounds do you think they will hear?

Can you identify smells in the air that help you know where you are or give you information about weather, animals, places, or traffic?

As you walk, try to find something you have never really looked at before. Take a few minutes to examine your discovery. Could you share it with a younger child. Why or why not?

Ideas for 3- to 6-year-olds

Each 9- to 11-year-old should try to accompany a young child (and the child's parents, if possible) on a walk around the child's home or neighborhood. As

they walk, suggest that the preteens think about the following questions:

What does the child seem to find interesting to look at?

What does the child seem to be interested in hearing and smelling?

What kinds of help does the child need to enjoy the walk?

Perhaps the preteen and young child can look together for something they can take home to examine thoroughly—a weed, leaf, stone, or a curiously shaped stick for example.

If you take an indoor walk, what treasures can you find to look at?

What do young children notice about the smells in the air?

Notes

Taking a walk can be an excellent movement activity. Sometimes we become so intent on reaching our destination that we pay little attention to what's happening along the way. Encourage both groups to walk slowly and take time to see, hear, smell, and feel the world around them. Sounds or sights that are memorable to the 3- to 6-year-old, may not appeal to the 9- to 11-year-old. Remind the older youth to encourage the younger children to talk about their senses and feelings; discussing their world with 9- to 11-year-olds gives young children chances to practice talking and listening. It's a good idea to spend a few minutes with the older youth discussing the safety rules for walks with 3- to 6-year-olds.

Fun With Fruits & Vegetables

Materials needed

Different kinds of fruits and vegetables
Plastic or butter knives
3 paper plates and napkins for each child
Sponge for cleaning up

Ideas for 9- to 11-year-olds

Have a variety of fruits and vegetables available. Ask the 9- to 11-year-olds to help you cut these into bite-sized pieces. After the fruit is sliced, discuss how the fruits and vegetables are alike or different. What can the youth tell about how the food will taste from the way it looks? Which fruits and vegetables are juicy, filled with seeds, or difficult to slice? Do the fruits and vegetables smell or feel differently?

Remind the group that by answering these questions they have used four of the five senses—hearing, smelling, touching, and seeing. Now, ask the youth to close their eyes. Give each member a piece of the raw fruit or vegetable that was prepared earlier. Can

they tell what it is without looking at it. When they taste the fruit or vegetables what senses are involved? How did they identify the fruit or vegetable?

Ideas for 3- to 6-year-olds

The 9- to 11-year-old and the preschooler may choose two easy-to-cut fruits or vegetables. They could wash the fruits or vegetables, cut off or peel the fruits' skins, and cut or break the fruit into pieces to be eaten. The 9- to 11-year-old may wish to talk with the preschooler about how these foods taste, feel, smell, look, and sound. Does the child seem to like one fruit or vegetable better than the other? What does the preschooler say or do to make you think this? The 9- to 11-year-old can help the preschooler learn by asking questions about the two vegetables or fruits. Are they alike or different? What colors are the slices? Where do fruits and vegetables come from? The 3- to 6-year-old helps the 9- to 11-year-old learn more about how people use all their senses.



Notes

This activity gives 9- to 11-year-olds a chance to use their senses while exploring a familiar object, thus becoming more aware of the role that the five senses play in learning. The older children begin to understand how important it is for young children to learn about the world around them through seeing, tasting, smelling, hearing, and touching. By using all the senses to identify the fruits and vegetables, the older

children are reminded of the importance of each sense in learning. Finally, this activity can give 9- to 11-year-olds a chance to talk with a preschooler about a shared activity. The leader can help the 9- to 11-year-olds learn not only the importance of sharing ideas and being creative with words, but also how to observe the ways preschoolers use language to explore and explain new experiences.

Match It

Materials needed

- 8½" x 11" construction paper
- pencils
- white glue
- clear contact paper (optional)
- scissors
- identical issues of magazines, catalogues, or newspapers

Ideas for 3- to 6-year-olds

One child alone will enjoy playing Match It, either as a game or a puzzle. Have the child try to match the small cards with the pictures on one or more large sheets. This way of playing the game develops a child's ability to match similar pictures, a skill necessary in learning to read.

When more than one child plays the game, each



Ideas for 9- to 11-year-olds

Match It is a game similar to Bingo, except that pictures are used instead of numbers.

1. Obtain two copies of the same issue of a magazine or two identical catalogues. Find lots of small pictures that would appeal to children, such as pictures of animals, foods, cars, or colors. To obtain pairs of identical pictures, cut the same pictures from both magazines or catalogues.
2. For each player, the game requires two sheets of construction paper and six pairs of pictures. Rule off one sheet of paper into six equal sections and paste a different picture on each section (Illustration A).
3. To make six small cards, divide and cut the second sheet of construction paper into six equal parts.
4. On each of the six small cards, paste a picture that matches a picture on the large sheet (Illustration B).
5. If you wish to make a more durable game, cover the cards and large sheet with clear contact paper.

player receives one large sheet. Another person, designated caller, holds up each small card, one at a time, showing the players the picture and asking, "Who has the horse (or cow, car, etc.)?" The player who has the picture on his or her large sheet calls out, "I do!" or "I have the horse, cow or car," etc. and claims the card. Then as the child covers the picture on the large sheet with the small card, he or she shouts, "Match It!" The game continues until all the children have covered all the pictures on their cards. There does not have to be a winner.

Notes

Playing Match It encourages children to recognize similarities and differences. Matching colors, animals, fruits, cards, or flowers is an exciting way to learn and practice this important pre-reading skill.

Make A Little Music

Materials needed

paper plates
small pebbles
yarn
plastic eggs
beans or buttons
tape (masking or cloth)
shoestrings or yarn
blocks of wood (2" wide by 3" long by 1" thick)

Ideas for 9- to 11-year-olds

In a group meeting, make a homemade musical instrument. Some suggestions are:

- (1) Tambourine. Punch holes around the outside edges of two paper plates, fill with small rocks, and lace closed with yarn, ribbon, or shoestrings.
- (2) Shakers. Fill old plastic egg with beans, old buttons, or small pebbles. To prevent spilling, tape the egg together with masking or cloth tape.
- (3) Wood Blocks. Sand two 2" x 3" x 1" wooden blocks until all surfaces are smooth. Be careful of sharp edges or splinters. Hold one block in each hand and clap. Different kinds of wood make different sounds.



Ideas for 3- to 6-year-olds

Use one of the musical instruments made at your group meeting with a preschooler. Is the child interested in playing a tune, or in merely playing with the instrument? Most preschoolers will want to experiment with sounds. Usually they are more interested in noises than in playing recognizable tunes. It's best to encourage children to use the instruments freely so that they learn to think of themselves as people who have good ideas. Learning to sing and play other people's music will come later.

Turn on the radio, TV, or record player, or sing a song. Although the young child may not be able to keep a beat or play the song, observe how she or he uses the instrument. You could also play an instrument yourself to form a band.

Notes

This activity is designed to help the 9- to 11-year-old enjoy making a musical instrument, creating sounds, and involving a preschooler in the joy of making music.

Help the 9- to 11-year-olds understand that although the young children may not be able to keep time to the music, they are having fun trying and they are learning too.

Safety is important in this activity. The 9- to 11-year-olds must be very careful when using small objects, such as beans, buttons, or rocks, which young children could stuff in their ears or swallow.

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